

a bipartisan solution to fix our roads and bridges, to invest in safe rail and in opportunities for us to have the infrastructure and transportation we need? Are we going to force American drivers to pay even more on repairs year after year after year? Are we going to be like Ike or are our Republican colleagues in the majority going to just kick the can down the road one more time?

In Eisenhower's time there was a bipartisan agreement for investing in America's infrastructure. We can do that again. There is absolutely no reason why we should not be able to do that. We have to come together. Republican colleagues who chair the committees need to be sending us a signal. We need to be holding hearings and working together to develop bills and bringing bills to the floor and debating them and making clear that now is the time to get it done.

Don't kick the can down the road again. Step up. Let's fix our roads and bridges. Let's invest in rebuilding America for the future. Let's create jobs and send a signal that we can work together to get that done in the 57 days until the highway trust fund is empty—57 days. It is enough time to do it if people think this is important. I hope they will.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

EXPORT-IMPORT BANK

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I have come to the floor this evening to join my colleague Senator HEITKAMP from North Dakota and to follow Senator CANTWELL from Washington, who spoke earlier this afternoon to talk about the importance of taking action to reauthorize the Export-Import Bank before that Bank expires at the end of this month.

At the end of June, the charter for the Export-Import Bank will expire, and that means billions of dollars of lending by the Bank to support American manufacturing and exports will come to a halt. I am sad to say that what we face right now is a completely unnecessary crisis. There is bipartisan support in both the House and the Senate for the Export-Import Bank, but we have just days until the charter expires. We need to begin now the process of reauthorizing this critical job-creating program.

I know there may be some different ideas in this Chamber about what the reauthorization of the Export-Import Bank should look like. I have introduced a bill that would reauthorize the bank for 7 years instead of 4, which has been one of the proposals. My bill would raise the cap on the lending for the Export-Import Bank instead of keeping it flat, and I know there are other discussions around language that addresses the financing of coal-fired powerplants abroad. But regardless of our different views on the specifics of

the reauthorization bill, Democrats and Republicans should all be able to agree that letting the Bank expire would be bad for America's businesses, bad for the employees of those businesses, and bad for our economy. That is because the Export-Import Bank supports American jobs at zero cost to taxpayers.

Let me just say that again, because I think there is this perception in some quarters that because we don't have an agreement on reauthorization, there must be some huge cost involved to the Export-Import Bank. In fact, it is just the opposite. The Export-Import Bank puts money into the Treasury of the Federal Government. It doesn't take money out.

In New Hampshire the Bank has supported \$314 million in export sales for our businesses since 2009. That support translates into more exports, into more manufacturing, and ultimately into more jobs.

Just this morning we had a number of businesses that rely on the Export-Import Bank come in to speak to some of the Senators. One person who was very eloquent with his comments was Michael Boyle from Boyle Energy in New Hampshire. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Michael Boyle's statement be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

EXAMINING THE EXPORT-IMPORT BANK'S REAUTHORIZATION REQUEST AND THE GOVERNMENT'S ROLE IN EXPORT FINANCING

BES&T is an exporter of U.S. Patented Commissioning Technology know as SigmaCommissioning. The most advanced equipment and engineered process available in the world today. BES&T and Sigma significantly helps its clients (global energy companies) start (commission) their energy infrastructure projects for far less cost, fuel, water and time.

In short, we convert the largest power plants and refineries from a construction environment into an operating environment faster, less costly and with a higher degree of quality than is available anywhere else in the world.

In the first 10 years of BES&T's history we did 90% of our work in the US.

We then spent 4 years inventing and perfecting our new commissioning technology before declaring our services, equipment, and engineering to be out of the R&D stage and therefore commercially viable.

We began exporting the work. Foreign companies had very limited technical support for our work and the competition for technical services was very weak. This meant that our clients would most likely be first adopters of this new technology. We were right. We also wanted to be tested, to apply our services in remote locations, in extraordinary terms on the toughest projects.

To be certain we could pay our people and vendors should clients not pay in far off lands, we insured our work with the EXIM bank. We sought to protect against major cash-flow disruption as we had little knowledge of collection, legal recovery, or any other understanding of the commercial codes of the countries where we were deploying our services. We could do the work but did not know what we would do if a foreign buyer did not pay us.

As our service became accepted and our abilities grew, so did our receivables. We solicited a National US Bank to provide us with the needed credit to support our working capital. They were agreeable to it domestically but we were informed that they had no means of securing our collateral to perfect full collection from foreign countries if we were to default. Even though those receivables were insured. So we worked with them to apply for a working capital guarantee package with EXIM much as we had done when we bought our first building using 504 support through the SBA. We were approved and fees were required and paid. Since the time we began with the credit insurance and the working capital LOC we have had neither claims nor losses that required EXIM support to the bank.

Here are some of the results. In the 7 years since we began exporting and working with EXIM we have:

Become known as the most advanced technical commissioning service company in power in 22 countries

Spent \$71 million on the cost of producing our work:

Trucking, Pipe and materials, Valves, Pumps, Filters, Manpower, Airfare, Fabrication, Chemicals, Hoses, Fittings, Ocean Freight, Air Freight

Spent \$25 million on back office or SGA support.

Paid 25% of our profits in federal taxes to the Treasury Department

Repatriated all of our profits.

Increased our revenue 4x

Increased our employment 6x

Paid 100% health insurance for all our workers.

Paid Christmas and Profit sharing bonuses

Provided an average wage of \$100K USD over our entire employment force

Increased benefits by adding dental, 401k, Life insurance, PTO, Family Leave etc.

Worked in 22 countries

Filed for and received further US Patents

Received an Audit by the IRS with received a notice of no changes or faults.

Donated \$218,000 to local charities and non-profits in New Hampshire

Successfully completed 60 projects

Completed 5x the revenue in the second 10 years of the company as was completed in the first 10 years

Eliminated 80,000,000 gallons of hazardous chemical waste in foreign countries.

Opened new markets in Oil and Gas production to augment power plant work.

Commissioned more than 27,351 megawatts of power and 200,000 barrels of oil per year from natural gas.

I personally have so enjoyed, and our company has benefited so much from the experience of and value derived from the EXIM bank that I was honored to be asked to volunteer my time to serve on the Advisory Committee of the bank, and have cosigned the 2013 and 2014 Competitiveness Report to the Congress of the United States. During that time I was chosen to serve as Chairman of the Sub-Committee on Public Engagement to the Advisory committee. I have also worked and consulted directly with Chairman Fred Hochberg on the issues impacting small business. I have also been asked to consult on the operational content and usability of the website offered by the bank. I have given voice to my experience to members of Congress, regional resource and economic development offices in New Hampshire, to local businesses thinking of working with EXIM. I have even been so honored as to join Chairman Hochberg in a discussion of the EXIM bank in the Roosevelt Room of the Whitehouse. To date my finest hour.

I can therefore state that I have been witness to positive changes in the bank's operating approach since my colleagues and I

volunteered to serve on the advisory committee. We, and the information we have imparted, have had a direct impact on the bank because the bank's leadership was fully intent on providing the best support not just to small business, but to all businesses using the bank's services. The bank and each and every employee of the EXIM bank I met and worked with cared greatly about our concerns and took action to make the experience and value greater.

I have very good knowledge of the value of this bank to both the US exporter companies using the bank and the taxpayers in the US.

While I wish that there were no ECA global competition for credit support, there is. In as much as I have read and been required to review and make comment on the OECD and Non-OECD research of the activities of the global competitors to US exporting I am fully aware that both good and bad actors are in abundance across the world, and that their supporting ECAs are outspending in both percentage and real dollars the EXIM bank of the US. These actions are deliberate and these organizations will go to great lengths to create the unbalanced competition that we would like to have eradicated.

Until such time as there is no further need for global ECA competition, I would therefore ask the House and Senate of the United States to consider the following actions.

1. Re-authorize the EXIM bank for 7 years.
2. Add an additional 20 billion USD authority to the Bank
3. Allow the bank greater flexibility to advertise its existence and benefits.
4. Allow the bank greater budget flexibility to conduct regional training and recruitment of customers.
5. Establish treaties with Non-OECD countries to severely restrict and penalize unfair ECA support or non-competitive actions related to exports
6. Ensure 100% compliance with the law of the United States and all foreign Borrower nations.
7. Ensure that US policy support by the bank is fair and equally balanced.
8. Promote the establishment of a global Uniform Commercial Code or similar instrument for the security of international assets derived from commercial transactions.
9. Empower domestic banks to further support export credit of viable receivables and exported collateral under some strict country limitation schedule.
10. Negotiate ECA interest rates worldwide to stabilize differentials.
11. Vigorously promote the bank to small businesses.

In conclusion, we, as American business people value our support from our government. I personally have benefited from being a citizen of the United States. When I was young my mother reached out for food stamps and welfare to assist us till we could get on our feet. I had school lunch programs in the public schools I attended. Not being able to afford college I joined the United States Navy. I was trained to be a boiler technician over a 6 year period. I traveled the world on 3 destroyers and a tender and earned a great education in life, leadership, steam, and boilers. I was honorably discharged and have gone on to build a family and a company. My company has 60 families employed and we all still travel the world and we still work on boilers. I have been blessed to have the people and government of these United States beside me then and beside me now. I have estimated that my work in this regard has returned many times over the money given to my mother for my benefit and the salary I earned in the Navy. I have visited the White House, and am now here in the Capitol speaking to our Congress. Beyond all that I have accomplished, my

mother and father are proud, my wife and sons too.

So I will make you a promise. When I don't need to use the EXIM bank any longer, when we have grown our business and employed hundreds more people, I will stop using the bank. But even then, I will volunteer my time to defend this organization and its people, and to help each and every small business that asks me to help them learn to export and how to do so with EXIM.

I love my country, am grateful to have its help, and wish to thank the Congress for making this valuable tool available.

Thank you for the honor of participating in this discussion.

God Bless the United States of America.

MICHAEL P. BOYLE,
President and CEO.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Michael Boyle is the CEO of Boyle Energy Services and Technology. They have a facility in Concord, NH, which I have had the good fortune to visit. They do great work. This testimony is what Michael gave before the House Committee on Financial Services this morning at a hearing that examined the Export-Import Bank's reauthorization request and the government's role in export financing.

As I said, Boyle Energy does impressive work. They optimize energy performance in power and energy infrastructure construction projects. Their services have reduced greenhouse gas emissions and eliminated millions of gallons of hazardous waste at facilities around the world. It is a great American small business story. Boyle Energy got connected with the Export-Import Bank a number of years ago at a forum in New Hampshire where the Ex-Im Bank announced its Global Access for Small Business Program to help small businesses export.

Right now, about 40 percent of large businesses export, but only 1 percent of small and medium-sized businesses export in the United States. Yet 95 percent of markets are outside of America. We need to help businesses such as Boyle Energy get into those international markets. That is exactly what the Ex-Im Bank has done. With the Export-Import Bank's support, Boyle Energy has grown its international sales 75 percent over the last 3 years.

Before using the Export-Import Bank's credit insurance, the company shipped just to Mexico and Canada. But now Boyle has customers in over a dozen countries. Their exports comprise 60 percent of the company's \$15 million in sales, and 10 of its 50 employees support their increase in international sales. Without the Bank, Boyle Energy's success just wouldn't be possible.

Last year the Ex-Im Bank supported \$10.7 billion worth of exports by American small businesses. So this is not just the big guys. It is not just the General Electrics and the Boeings. It is small businesses such as we have in New Hampshire where 96 percent of our employers are small businesses. We should not take this important tool—this financing tool for our small businesses—away from America's job creators.

I think it is important to note that it is not just the direct users of the Bank's products that will suffer. It will also hurt those smaller companies that sell to larger companies who use Ex-Im Bank financing, for example, manufacturers such as Albany Engineering in Rochester, NH, which makes parts for airplane engines. Timken in Keene and Lebanon sell their products to Boeing. When we cut off financing for those products, it is going to have a real impact on American manufacturing. It is going to have an impact on jobs in New Hampshire and across this country.

Now is the time for us to come together. We can do this. We can get this authorization done. We have support in this Chamber to reauthorize the Ex-Im Bank, to help our small businesses so we can get them into the international markets. We need to do this reauthorization before the Bank charter expires at the end of this month, and I urge my colleagues to join us in taking action.

I yield the floor, and I thank Senator HEITKAMP for her leadership on this issue.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Ms. HEITKAMP. Mr. President, this is a story and a movie we see all too frequently in this Chamber and in the Congress—manufactured crisis after manufactured crisis after manufactured crisis. Here we are a few short days away from actually seeing the charter of the Export-Import Bank expire.

Think about that—a 70-year institution, a critical piece of trade infrastructure. We spent the better part of the last work period talking about trade promotion authority, and for very many of us this was a very difficult vote. It was a conflicting vote. At the end of the day, the one argument that sells the day is that 95 percent of all consumers in the world live outside the United States.

If we are not participating in trade, if we are not working to make sure our exports are competitive, if we are not making a difference for American manufacturers, we are going to lose the competition for the customer. We are going to lose the opportunity to grow our manufacturing base.

So the Export-Import Bank—not a lot of people know what it is, but the people who do and the businesses that do know this is a critical piece of trade infrastructure. The irony perhaps of this whole issue is there is no one—there is no group outside of conservative think tanks that does not agree the Export-Import Bank needs to be reauthorized.

We have the U.S. Chamber of Commerce begging us in the Banking Committee to reauthorize the Export-Import Bank. We have the National Association of Manufacturers that tells us overwhelmingly—the people who support that trade association, who are represented by that trade association, want reauthorization of the Export-Import Bank. We know the unions that

represent the workers who work in these industries have been asking us to do the right thing.

So here we are, once again, at the eleventh hour. Last year, we agreed to a short-term extension, 6 months, believing we would not be in this spot today, believing we would not be at the last minute threatening the charter of the Export-Import Bank. So guess what. We have over \$15 billion of credit in the pipeline. Think about 15 billion dollars' worth of manufacturing exports in this country. I want you to think not about the manufacturing exports, I want you to think about what that means, what that means for the American worker who works in those manufacturing facilities. They look at this and they say that you are all about the economy. You all run saying that we are all about jobs, we are all about improving the economy, creating opportunity by getting American manufacturing back on its feet. Yet we cannot do something that has been done for 70 years and frequently by unanimous consent in this body.

So where is the opposition? The opposition is nothing more than ideology. The opposition comes from conservative think tanks that score this, that scare Members and say that if you agree to reauthorize the Export-Import Bank, that will be a black mark on your record. You will not be with us. You know what. It is time we were with the American workers. It is time we were with the small businesses. It is time we dispel the myth of this institution, the Export-Import Bank, and start talking about this as a job-creating entity.

I have a chart here. It is a theme that Senator KIRK and I are sounding. Senator KIRK and I have the bipartisan bill that we would like to see advanced in this body to reauthorize the Export-Import Bank. We have tried very hard to balance the concerns people have for reform with a reauthorization that gives some level of certainty to American manufacturing, to the institutions that finance them. Make no mistake, it is not that this is public money. Simply what we are saying is, if a bank gives a loan to an American manufacturer, if a smalltown bank gives a loan to an American manufacturer, we will help guarantee that loan. It is like an SBA—it is like an SBA for manufacturing exports.

What is next? We are going to take on the SBA because they are doing too much good to help American businesses? So I want you to think about this: 164,000 American jobs. Those are direct American jobs, not the secondary jobs that we know come from this primary sector, development. When you look at economics, you think about those jobs that are secondary and those jobs that are primary sector.

Every manufacturing job that deals with exports is a primary sector job. It is new wealth creation for our State. Economically, that is manna from

Heaven because that new wealth comes here in the payments for exports. It circulates around our economy, allows our retail businesses to thrive, allows our restaurants and our secondary businesses, whether they are dry cleaners, whether they are people in the service industry, to support those primary sector jobs.

So 164,000 primary jobs, exports of \$27.5 billion—\$27.5 billion—those are all U.S. exports supported by the Ex-Im Bank. When we look at it, guess what. People say: Well, it must cost us something to do this. It must cost the American taxpayers something to fund the Export-Import Bank if we are seeing those kinds of results. Guess what. Not only does it not cost us, it returned \$7 billion to the Treasury.

Think about that. What is wrong with this? What is bad about this? Where is this failing the taxpayers of this country? Where is this failing the American worker? The simple answer is it is not. What is failing the American worker is this institution, the United States Congress, because we are failing to hand the tools to those businesses that can, in fact, create jobs, create economic wealth, and move our country forward. People will say: Oh, my goodness. It is all of those big companies. It is GE, it is Boeing, and that is really whom we are talking for.

Well, I want to kind of look behind the curtain of that a little bit, not just talk about small businesses in my State that are going to benefit and the agricultural producers that benefit from this institution. Think about the literally thousands of small businesses that support Boeing, the thousands of small businesses that support the folks at GE. Think about the businesses that actually are the contractors with these large institutions that make parts, that make the sandwiches that feed the employees. This is primary sector growth. We know that adds to the benefit of the entire economy.

So let's talk a little bit about why someone from North Dakota cares about the Export-Import Bank. If you look at more than 58,000 small businesses around the country depending on the Export-Import Bank to finance the export deals, they will all lose if we do nothing. There is \$15.9 billion, as I said, in the pipeline.

The Export-Import Bank has supported \$139 billion in sales in North Dakota alone, since 2007, and \$102 million in exports from our State. Think about that—the little State of North Dakota, how significant this institution is.

I want to tell the story of a small business. We heard just heart-wrenching stories, one from California, an entrepreneur who gave his all in Vietnam, 100-percent disabled. He has a small business, had a dream, living the American dream, serving his country. Guess what. He lost. Because of the uncertainty here, he lost a \$57 million contract putting over 100 people out of work. Right now, he is challenged because he has a \$200 million contract on

the line waiting for reauthorization of the Export-Import Bank. Because—guess what—the people he is selling to are not going to wait to find out if he has financing. They are going to turn to the next manufacturer. Do you know who that next manufacturer is? That next manufacturer is China.

Do you think our competitors across the world, whether it is India or China, who are not looking at reforming their export credit organization—guess what they are doing. They are pumping billions of dollars more. They are taking advantage of this. They are taking advantage of this opportunity. This is a sign in the Beijing airport: "The Export Import Bank of China. Want to be the best in a better world?"

They are not hiding this. They are not saying that is inappropriate. They are bragging about it. They are bragging where they think those businessmen are coming in and taking a look at where that financing opportunity is. You might say: Well, the private sector can do it. That is not true. That is absolutely not true. We have had representation from almost every financial organization in this town saying we need the Export-Import Bank to support our customers who need to have that credit for their exports.

So I want to close talking about a great business in Wahpeton, ND, a town I grew up very close to. WCCO Belting in Wahpeton, ND, is a great example. It is a 60-year-old, family-owned rubber supply company, which started out as a shoe repair business and diversified into repairing parts for farm trucks and then into new seats for tractors, canvass belting, and wooden slats.

Today, the company provides rubber products used in farm equipment, such as belts for harvesting grain or producing round bailers or tube conveyers to move seeds and grain. Those are supplied to major farm equipment companies around the world. You know what. The simple fact is—and they will tell you if they were standing right here—that company could not have done it without the Export-Import Bank 12 years ago, which allowed WCCO Belting to pursue export opportunities it had been ignoring. The Bank has supported more than \$830,000 in exports from WCCO since 2007. The Export-Import Bank helps make sure small businesses get paid in a timely fashion for what they sell. Not getting paid in a timely manner from foreign entities very quickly can put a small business out of work.

The company now has 200 employees who generate more than 60 percent of their annual sales from revenues from customers who are located outside of the United States, all possible because of the Export-Import Bank. Without the Bank, they would be unable to compete in this global marketplace. This is one of those stories in Washington, DC, that makes the rest of the world believe Washington does not get it, that the United States Congress

does not get it. Because they do not live in their world, they live in the real world, where you have to finance what you have, where those challenges get harder and harder every day, and where you are competing in a market where people do this.

There are 70 export credit agencies in the world, all competing for the same business, all helping their homegrown businesses compete for the same business we are competing for. Unilateral disarmament. So it was not for any other purpose than the passion we have for this institution that Senator CANTWELL and I started talking about this during the TPA discussion, started saying: We need a path forward so the charter of the Bank does not expire, so that we actually reauthorize the Bank before the end of this month.

I would like to tell you that the prospects are great, that the overwhelming economic logic of the Export-Import Bank has overcome all of the ideological discussions. I would love to tell you that. I would love to tell you we are absolutely doing something in a timely fashion, we are doing something that makes common sense. Guess what. We are not. We are going to see the charter expire unless we, every day, come here and beg for a vote, unless we see movement in the House of Representatives, so that the charter does not expire. I am saying: Do not leave the small businesses of this country, the hope of this country behind. Let's reauthorize the Export-Import Bank, let's do it sooner rather than later, and let's actually respond to the concerns of the American manufacturing population.

I yield the floor.

URBAN FLOODING AWARENESS ACT

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, big storms and heavy rain often lead to flooding in cities. It seems like that is happening more frequently and the floods have been more damaging. In May we saw the extent of the damage that can be done when flood waters inundate a city. Twenty-seven people died in Houston, TX as a result of the rainfall and flooding there. Eleven people are still missing. The truth of the matter is, we don't have very much data on frequency, severity, or how we might better prepare for the kind of weather that turns into flooded streets, businesses, and homes.

I introduced a bill this week, with Senator WHITEHOUSE and Congressman QUIGLEY in the House, to address that. The Urban Flooding Awareness Act calls for a study to document the costs to families, business, and government associated with urban flooding. There are many ways we can do a better job of preparing for storm flooding—including creative, environmentally sound, “green infrastructure” approaches—but first we need to have a firm understanding of the scope of the problem.

Stronger, more destructive storms are pounding urban areas at an alarming rate. They threaten the quality of drinking water. Urban floods erode river banks and spread pollution. They bring massive damage to homes and businesses. When you consider events like Superstorm Sandy and Hurricane Katrina, it is clear we need to do more to understand how flooding can be predicted and prevented.

In Illinois we have had more than our fair share of urban flooding in recent years. Chicago has seen three “hundred year floods” in the last 5 years.

Just a few inches of water can cause thousands of dollars in damage for both home and small business owners. Wet basements from flooding events are one of the top reasons people do not purchase a particular home. Industry experts estimate flooding can lower property values by 10 to 25 percent. Moreover, nearly 40 percent of small businesses do not reopen following a disaster, according to FEMA, the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Most homeowners in urban areas do not have Federally backed flood insurance through FEMA's flood insurance program. They are not able to participate in the flood insurance program because it focuses entirely on designated floodplains along rivers, not in urban areas. With the frequency and severity of storms growing year by year, we need to gain a better understanding of flooding in our cities.

A clear definition of urban flooding— which this legislation would establish—would allow experts to understand the scope of the problem, develop solutions, and consider more than just coastal and river flooding when designing flood maps. The bill also would require FEMA to coordinate a study on the costs and prevalence of urban flooding and the effectiveness of green and other infrastructure.

The Urban Flooding Awareness Act will help American communities identify ways to protect our investments and our environment. I urge my colleagues to support it.

REMEMBERING MARSELIS PARSONS

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I would like to pay honor to a Vermont legend who passed away last month. Marselis Parsons, known to friends as “Div,” was a deeply respected newsman in my home State. His low, steady voice in anchoring the evening news became a mainstay in living rooms for decades. Div Parsons knew news. He knew the importance of having personal connections, and he built trust based on his integrity and fairness.

Div Parsons rose through the ranks at Vermont's CBS affiliate, WCAX Channel 3, and he never became too important in his own mind that he wouldn't report on a fire or track down a lead. In short, he knew the pulse of the State, and he reported on what he knew. He also shared his years of experience with young reporters, many of whom he hired straight out of college and gave them the break they needed.

When he wasn't working long hours at the station, he was known to take to the waters of the great Lake Champlain, either on his antique power boat or, if the winds held up, under full sail. In retirement, he still relished tracking the latest political news.

I am grateful for our friendship and our many conversations over time, and I am grateful that he was able to cherish the recent birth of his granddaughter, Pippa. Div Parsons' death will leave a void, no doubt, but we'll have many memories to share.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a fitting tribute to Div Parsons that ran in the Times Argus newspaper.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From Barre Montpelier Times Argus, June 1, 2015]

‘DIV’ DEPARTS

This last week saw the departure of Bob Schieffer from the anchor desk of the CBS show “Face The Nation,” and closer to home, the passing of a Vermont television icon, Marselis Parsons. While Schieffer occupied a place in the national consciousness, it is not a mistake to place the two men in company. They represent the best of an era in television that is rapidly receding into history.

For Vermont, Parsons was the face that a generation of Vermonters grew up with, in an era when the habits of the populace were still to turn on the local news at 6 p.m., followed by the national report at 7 p.m. He was both larger than life, and unassuming in a way that led us to welcome him into our homes. “Div,” as he was nicknamed through obscure origins, was for many the one and only local news anchor they knew.

Because of the vagaries of television transmission over the hills of Vermont, many children in rural homes—and their parents—had just one or two options on the dial beyond the local PBS station. Even then, the reception was sometimes tricky leading to elaborate coat hanger antennas on the TV and “snow” making the picture a bit fuzzy. But the television was often the window to the wider world—both the world at large, and because of Parsons and family-owned WCAX, the world in the next town over, or in the state of Vermont at large.

He was the guide to the stories that connected Vermont and gave us a sense of shared identity, whether we turned on the evening news in Derby Line or in Tinmouth. He reported on the first Green Up Day, in 1970, on the return of hostages from Iran in 1980, and was the anchor the day that Dick Snelling died and Howard Dean was sworn in as governor. Parsons became synonymous with Channel 3, and both remain Vermont institutions.

He looked us in the eye and told us the bad news when tragedy had struck; he also shared the triumphs of the day, or narrated some kind of community gathering in one of the tiny towns that Vermont is known for. He often shared a chuckle with his co-anchors, but never allowed his personality—of which there was plenty—or his demeanor to outshine the efforts of the team as a whole.

He could be, as his former colleague Kristin Carlson recalled, unscripted and direct on live television, meaning the reporters in the field had better know their story and be able